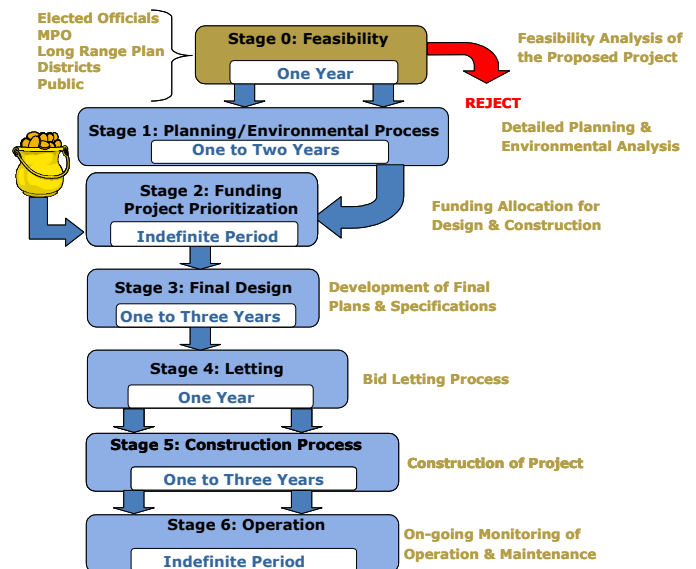


CHAPTER 4

INPUTS TO THE STAGE 1 PROCESS

Before initiating the Stage 1 Environmental Process, the DOTD first completed a Stage 0 Feasibility Study to determine the project's feasibility, evaluate the financial and schedule implications of pursuing the project, and render a Go/No-Go/Delay or conditional continuance decision to further advancing the project. For Federal-aid projects being advanced into the Stage 1 Environmental Process, a determination was also made, and concurred with by the lead federal agency, on how the project would be documented in the Stage 1 Environmental Process, as a Categorical Exclusion (CE), an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The Stage 0 Feasibility Study is the initial building block of the DOTD's Project Development Process, and its findings and decisions are important and required inputs to the Stage 1 process.



The following Stage 0 information must be obtained and reviewed prior to commencing the Stage 1 Environmental Process:

- Preliminary Purpose and Need Statement – preliminary description of the transportation problem or other needs that the proposed project is intended to address.
- Preliminary Alternatives and Initial Feasibility Analysis – conceptual alternatives considered technically feasible,

including potential impacts analysis and discussion of project challenges.

- Preliminary Environmental Review – identification of all potential environmental “show stopping” constraints or issues that influenced early determinations of project feasibility, timing, and cost. Also, identification of major community issues impacted by the project during construction and operational phases of the project.
- Design Criteria and Initial Context Determination – preliminary basic design criteria, which may include functional roadway classification, design speeds, horizontal and vertical constraints, and any required waterway, levee or railroad clearances.
- Agency and Public Involvement Plan – jurisdictional review agencies and interested public or private parties that expressed interest in the project, and other information relevant to the development of a Stage 1 public involvement plan.
- Preliminary Project Estimate and Budget – estimated costs for Stage 1 NEPA and environmental studies, as well as preliminary design, right-of-way acquisition, utilities relocations, construction, and environmental mitigation costs, in current year dollars. Obtain the preliminary costs from the Project Finance Committee.